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Indian Official Tells

How Svetlana Stalin Defected

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STATINTL

NEW DELHI, March 22—Svetlana Stalin Alilueva simply phoned for a taxi one evening from the Soviet Embassy compound hostel here, drove down the street a block and walked up the broad marble stairs of the neighboring United States Embassy to ask for help in defecting, India's Minister of External Affairs, M. C. Chagla, has indicated to Parliament.

It was the Indian government's first official accounting of the disappearance from here two weeks ago of the late Soviet dictator Josef Stalin's daughter. India's top diplomat seemed determined to tell his country's Soviet friends, over and over again, that India was an innocent, helpless bystander to the whole embarrassing incident.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC EXPERT

Chagla seemed determined not to ruffle India's American friends either. Despite cries of "CIA," he said U.S. Ambassador Chester Bowles had "emphatically and categorically denied" to him that the embassy second secretary who squired Svetlana on her pre-dawn plane flight to Rome was a member of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

The second secretary, Robert F. Rayle, is listed in the diplomatic directory as concerned with political and economic affairs in the American Embassy's external affairs section.

Chagla said India was faced with the report of alleged involvement by the CIA and a denial of any involvement by the ambassador. But he left himself an out by assuring Parliament: "If anything comes to our light or knowledge which defects from what the ambassador has said we will certainly take necessary action."

Other Indian officials later indicated privately that they thought Bowles had no choice but to deny such a report when Chagla called him in for an explanation.

Amidst cries of "who gave her the money?" Chagla ac-

knowledgeed that Svetlana's air ticket had been purchased by the American Embassy.

GUEST OF INDIA'S FRIEND

He said that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's closest cabinet colleague and confidant, Commerce Minister Dinesh Singh, the Raja of Kalakankar, had put Svetlana up during most of her two-and-a-half month stay in India.

Mrs. Gandhi herself acknowledged not long ago that both she and Svetlana were overnight guests at the same time in mid-January at Singh's rajarate in Uttar Pradesh State's Kalakankar.

Chagla emphasized that since Svetlana had come to India to toss into the Ganges the ashes of her late friend and Dinesh Singh's uncle, Kanwar Brajesh Singh, the Commerce Minister was merely extending hospitality as a private family obligation.

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